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SUBJECT: LITHUANIA: 2005/2006 ALLIED CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
COMMON DEFENSE

REF: STATE 223383

1. The following is the response for Lithuania for the 2005 and 2006 Report on Allied Contributions to the Common Defense. Unless otherwise stated, average exchange rate used throughout the report is: 1 USD = 2.775 Lita.

General Assessment

2. (U) Lithuania is one of the United States' staunchest allies in Europe and is an active participant in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), the International Stabilization and Assistance Force (ISAF), and the Global War on Terrorism. This small country on the European Union's border also significantly contributes to the common defense by promoting and strengthening relations with its neighbors, building a reliable and compatible defense force, and participating in international crisis prevention and response and peacekeeping operations. The government works closely with the USG on summit initiatives, including the NATO Response Force, and on preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction. Since becoming a member of NATO and the EU in 2004, Lithuania has moved rapidly from recipient to donor status, contributing financially and in kind and exceeding expectations for a country of its size and resources.

3. (U) Lithuania is a reliable transatlantic partner and a strong advocate of NATO's primacy as the guarantor of security in Europe. Fully supporting the common security policy for the Euro-Atlantic area, Lithuania strongly advocates for 24/7 air policing coverage of the Baltics. Lithuania supports Baltic air policing with a regional airspace surveillance command and control center (RASCC) in Karmeleva. Lithuania continues to strongly support the joint Baltic mine clearance squadron (BALTRON) as part of a regional effort in combating the active sea mine threat from munitions laid during both World Wars and the Soviet era. Lithuania endorses development of a European Security and Defense Policy and capabilities that neither duplicate nor undermine NATO's own. At the end of 2005, the first Lithuanian battalion-sized task forces successfully completed NATO assessment for readiness to conduct deployments in support of NATO Article V operations.

4. (U) A rapidly expanding economy in 2004-2005 allowed the Lithuanian government to increase defense spending in the 2006 budget by approximately 12%, but this increase was insufficient to meet the targeted 0.05% of GDP annual rise and just allowed Lithuania to hold fast at 1.27% of GDP for defense. Despite sustained economic growth (an average 7% annual increase in GDP for the five-year period), with a GDP per capita of only 46% of the EU average, Lithuania has a long way to go to bring its citizens' standard of living up to EU levels. The government's social agenda dictated budget priorities for 2006 spending. A last-minute push by parliamentary supporters of a robust contribution to common defense secured funding for aircraft acquisitions and upgrades to the country's regional radar capability. Military planners expect the funding shortfall will push back deadlines for certain of Lithuania's military transformation goals, including the ability to more rapidly develop logistical units, fund air force modernization, develop naval infrastructure, and accelerate the procurement of specialized equipment for special forces units.

5. (U) Lithuania has politically and materially supported the alliance's international missions, contributing a total 284 personnel and 36.616 million Litass (13.19 million USD) to international operations in 2005. The parliament facilitated Lithuania's support for international operations by increasing the ceiling of deployable personnel to 420 and empowering the military to deploy or redeploy troops within theater without seeking explicit parliamentary authorization.

Contributions to the Global War on Terrorism

Iraq:

¶6. (U) Lithuania was an early supporter of U.S. policy and coalition operations in Iraq, with troops on the ground since 2003. Lithuanian soldiers serving under Danish and Polish command in Iraq conduct patrols, assist in maintaining public order, and are involved in rebuilding and reconstructions efforts. By the end of 2005, approximately 116 Lithuanian personnel participated in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), serving under the Polish and Danish commands (and with the United Kingdom in the Headquarters for Multinational Division South East). In response to increasing stability in Iraq and the increasing capability of Iraqi military and law enforcement authorities, the GOL announced its intention to reduce their numbers in OIF to about 50, in concert with other U.S. and coalition reductions. Lithuania also provides three trainers to the NATO Training Mission - Iraq (NTM-I).

Afghanistan:

¶7. (U) Lithuania maintained a commitment of approximately 40 Special Operations Force (SOF) personnel and one staff liaison officer to the U.S.-led Operation ENDURING FREEDOM in Afghanistan through 2004-2005 and plans to return a SOF unit in 2006. In 2005, Lithuania undertook to establish and lead a NATO multinational Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Afghanistan's remote Ghor Province. Since standing up the PRT in August 2005, Lithuania's 124 personnel in Chagcharan have had a significant impact on the stability and quality of life of local residents, implementing water sanitation projects, building bridges, and repairing and reconstructing a community orphanage and local mosque. They have identified the priorities for their humanitarian relief projects in concert with local civic organizations, contributing to nascent democracy-building initiatives and regional security in the process. The overall Lithuanian operational expense in Afghanistan was 14.512 million Litass (5,229,550 USD) in 2005.

Within the Region:

¶8. (U) Lithuania's accession to the European Union and NATO opened up new opportunities for the GOL to engage with its neighbors to the east, most notably in the context of the EU's "New Neighborhood" policy. Leveraging its historical experience as part of the Soviet Union, Lithuania seeks to assist the transition of former Soviet states to democracy and integration into European western institutions such as the EU and NATO. In Belarus, the Lithuanian government supports work with nascent democratic forces both unilaterally and through regional frameworks such as the Enhanced Partnership in Northern Europe (E-PINE). Lithuania is the NATO point of contact in Minsk. President Valdas Adamkus was instrumental in mediating the election crisis in Ukraine, and Lithuania is one of the most vocal advocates for Ukraine's bid to become a member of the EU and NATO. Lithuania supports Moldova's aspiration to join the EU and encourages the countries of the South Caucasus to pursue European integration. Lithuania contributed 195,000 Litass (70,270 USD) for the training of South Caucasus and Ukrainian officers' studies at the Lithuanian Military Academy and 50,000 Litass (18,018 USD) for the training of South Caucasus, Moldovan, and Croatian officers' studies at the Baltic Defense College.

Broader Middle-East and North Africa (BMENA):

¶9. (U) Lithuania supports the USG and European agenda regarding Middle East peace, but has not been an active player in this area. Lithuania has plans to host a parliamentary exchange with Palestinian Authority parliamentarians in 2006, having hosted a similar and very successful program for Iraqi parliamentarians in 2004.

Worldwide:

¶10. (U) Lithuanian soldiers have also performed as peacekeepers in the Balkans, contributing 32 personnel and 7.153 million Litass (roughly 2.57 million USD) to KFOR in ¶2005. In 2006, Lithuanians will serve with Poles and Ukrainians in a joint peacekeeping battalion in Kosovo. Humanitarian Relief:

¶11. (U) The Lithuanian military offered more than 2,000 field rations, ten water pumps, and medical supplies to victims of Hurricane Katrina, but the United States turned down the offer. Following the 2005 earthquake in Pakistan, a Lithuanian armed forces water purification unit (ten personnel plus vehicles and equipment) deployed to and has been participating in the NATO relief effort Operation SWIFT RELEASE. Lithuania has expended 141,300 Litass (48,724 USD at an exchange rate of 1 USD = 2.9 Litass) in this operation.

Lithuania's PRT in Afghanistan has engaged in bridge building, repaired a local mosque and an orphanage, and provided a water purification system to the local hospital. A Lithuanian military medical team also provides medical services to the people of Ghor province.

Capacity Building:

¶12. (U) Lithuania actively seeks to help build capacity in partner countries such as Ukraine, Moldova, Croatia, and the South Caucasus. The GOL spends approximately 70,270 USD for students from these nations to study at the Lithuanian Military Academy and the Baltic Defense College. GOL defense officials maintain their most extensive dialogue with Ukrainian defense officials, focusing on administrative capacity building and resource management. In general, the GOL is eager to engage and share its experience in joining NATO with new democracies in the region.

¶13. (U) Since EU Accession in 2004, Lithuania law enforcement agencies have increased their efforts to impose strict border and customs controls on the heavily transited Lithuanian/EU borders with Belarus and Russia.
Counterproliferation Contributions:

¶14. (U) Lithuanian law enforcement authorities cooperate fully on monitoring and freezing assets of suspected terrorists. They are vigilant in counter- and non-proliferation activities. Lithuania cooperates with the USG on border control, port security, and export controls. The GOL is a member of the Australia Group and signatory to the Nuclear Proliferation Treaty. Lithuania fully endorses the principles of the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), has participated in nearly every proliferation security initiative exercise in Europe, and plans to host a table exercise in 2006.

¶15. (U) In 2005, a senior Lithuanian customs official attended Technical Experts Working group regarding nuclear export control in Almaty. In 2005, Lithuanian officials participated in developing a Lithuanian border security assessment focused on the port of Klaipeda and the Russian enclave of Kaliningrad. At the end of 2005, a delegation from the Lithuanian Police and Prosecutor General's office attended a Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) border exercise in Estonia.

Interoperability:

¶16. (U) Lithuania continues to transform its military capabilities in order to leverage interoperability, particularly in the NATO context through its long-term training and advisory program with the Danish military, to certify the Lithuanian Rapid Reaction Brigade for NATO Article V operations. Lithuanian Special Operations Forces (SOF) have participated in a number of exchanges and exercises with SOF from the United States and other allied nations, and Lithuania air forces personnel participated in the NATO COOPERATIVE KEY international air exercise in 2005. Lithuanian military logistical personnel have completed the US-provided Joint Interoperability, Readiness, and Deployability Training (JDIRT) to improve load-out and cargo-handling capabilities for international operations.

¶17. (U) As a new NATO member, Lithuania continues to demonstrate its commitment to the alliance through its personnel and monetary contributions for NATO Response Forces (NRF) 5 & 6. For NRF 5, Lithuania will provide 35 Special Operations personnel, approximately 5 million Litass (1.8 million USD) in national funds, as well as the acquisition of long-term property. In support of NRF 6, Lithuania will provide 50 Lithuanian Special Operations personnel, a 10 person Water Purification Unit, and approximately 4 million Litass (1.44 million USD).

¶18. (U) Lithuania continues to purchase significant quantities of spare parts and equipment from the United States. In FY2004-2005, U.S. foreign military sales to Lithuania were valued at 11.46 million USD. Lithuania is using FMF funding mixed with national funds to finance major equipment and support which simultaneously modernize and increase the interoperability of its armed forces. Over 4 million USD of U.S.-provided funds were used to purchase HMMWVs to outfit the High Readiness Battalion. This acquisition will further enhance the Lithuanian readiness posture and continue to increase its level of interoperability within its own force structure and with its allies. Contractor support for Defense Reform was continued, and Lithuania committed 1.341 million USD in FMF in order to establish a national simulation center capable of simulation exercises from squad to brigade level. Lithuania also received U.S. grant funding through an OIF supplemental, which it used in FY04 to procure individual soldier equipment and night vision devices to support Lithuanian troops deployed in Iraq.

¶19. (U) In 2005, Lithuania committed an additional 1.003

million USD in FMF for HMMWVs for their High Readiness Battalion while continuing to support the RASCC with an outlay of 1.2 million USD. The purchase of Automated Aircraft Load Planning System (AALPS) software and training will be used to better support joint US/Lithuanian logistical support operations out of Zoknai Air Base, Lithuania. This will also increase Lithuania's interoperability with NATO and U.S. transport flights as well as help to decrease the burden upon U.S. load masters supporting monthly cargo flights in support of the PRT mission from Lithuania to Afghanistan. The procurement of a Lithuanian portable military mission/operations Geospatial Support System mapping center valued at 160 thousand USD will allow the production of local area maps and survey materials for military commanders deployed in Iraq, Afghanistan and the Balkans.

Direct Cost Sharing

120. (U) The United States has no permanent, forward-deployed military presence in Lithuania; however, at the beginning of FY 2006, the USAF deployed an expeditionary fighter squadron to Zoknai Airbase to support the NATO Baltic Air Policing mission. Lithuania procured weather-protected aircraft shelters in FY 2005 for NATO Air Policing aircraft at a cost of 5 million Litas (1.8 million USD). Additionally, the GOL spent 8.4 million Litas (3.03 million USD) for other Air Policing support costs in 2005. Lithuania contributed 3.452 million Litas (1.243 million USD) to the Air Control Unit in support of NATO's combined air defense system. The Lithuanian Military has invested 10 million Litas (3.6 million USD) in the construction of a cruise ship terminal in Klaipeda which can be used in a Host Nation Support role during a NATO contingency operation. Additionally, Lithuania contributes to common security through NATO Security Investment Programs (NSIPs), where the national cost comes to 10% of the project. Lithuania's contribution in 2005 was approximately 5 million Litas (1.8 million USD).

Indirect Cost Sharing

121. (U) Lithuania reimburses the Value Added Tax (VAT) for official purchases of services, materials, and supplies, to include utilities and telecommunications. No customs duties are charged for official imports. VAT and excise taxes are waived for the purchase of petroleum/oil/lubricants (POL). Navigation and landing fees are paid by the Ministry of Defense.

Operational Contributions

122. (U) Balkans: Lithuania contributed one staff/liaison officer to TF ALTHEA (EU) and 32 troops to KFOR. The overall Lithuanian operational expense in the Balkans in 2005 was 7.153 million Litas (2.58 million USD).

123. (U) Iraq: Lithuania contributed two trainers to the NATO Training Mission-Iraq (NTM-I) and 114 troops to OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM (although this number will drop to approximately 50 troops in early 2006). The overall Lithuanian operational expense in Iraq in 2005 was 14.810 million Litas (5.337 million USD).

124. (U) Afghanistan: Lithuania contributed one staff liaison officer to CFC-A (OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM) and 124 troops to the Provincial Reconstruction Team in Ghor Province (ISAF). The overall Lithuanian operational expense in Afghanistan in 2005 was 14.512 million Litas (5.23 million USD).

125. (U) Pakistan: Lithuania contributed 10 personnel and associated equipment and vehicles to SWIFT RELEASE, the NATO earthquake relief operation in Pakistan. The overall Lithuanian operational expense in Pakistan in 2005 was 141.3 thousand Litas (50.92 thousand USD).

126. (U) In total, Lithuania contributed more than 284 personnel and 36.616 million Litas (13.19 million USD) to international operations in 2005.

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